



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park

P.O. Box 517

Skagway, Alaska 99840



L7019(KLGO)

December 19, 2005

State of Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
STIP Comments
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive, Suite 200
Juneau, AK 99801-7898

Gentlemen and Ladies:

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft 2006-2008 Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP): Southeast Region Excerpt. I understand that the City of Skagway will be commenting on the draft plan seeking the inclusion of additional Skagway projects in the STIP.

Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park supports the City in its request for two additions to the STIP:

- 1) Previously on the STIP, but removed in approximately 2004, was a project titled "Skagway Gateway Pedestrian Improvements," or similar. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park pursued and acquired funds to partner with both the State and City in this project. When the project was removed from the STIP, these funds were redirected to another State project, the Dyea Road improvements. We remain committed to partnering with the City and State in this project should it be resurrected. It will address a significant public safety issue in Skagway at the southern gateway to Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park. Transportation planners working for the National Park Service over the past two years have confirmed the safety issue at this narrow approach to downtown. The project would also provide a crucial pedestrian link between the AMHS terminal, downtown Skagway, and Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park independently requests your adding this project back into the STIP.
- 2) In 2005, the State made substantial improvements to the Dyea Road, with the "Dyea Road Safety and Surface Upgrade project (#10065)." This project ultimately stopped short of Dyea proper, due to the large costs involved in addressing public safety issues on the final stretch of road – the "Hackett Hill" section. The Dyea Road is the sole access/egress for an important and highly visited unit of Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, particularly by commercial outfitters bringing individuals via vans and busses to the Park and to other recreational areas in Dyea. The safety issue is significant due to this high volume of large vehicle usage. While Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park wishes planning for this project to be done in recognition of the roads location relative to the Chilkoot Trail and Dyea Site National Historical Landmark (NHL), the Park will be very willing to participate in NHL impacts mitigation,

perhaps as we did with the first segment of the project. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park supports the City of Skagway in its request to have this project added to the STIP.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. If you have questions, you may contact me directly at 907-983-9216.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Corless', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James P. Corless
Superintendent

cc: Skagway City Manager